1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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penalty was not only enforced against improper marriage, but even against illicit intercourse on the part of persons within the forbidden limits. Mr. Lyon related to me a case that occurred since he has been living in the country, where the power of the Chief Chirimo was insufficient to protect a man who married his second or third cousin. Fortunately for the delinquents, they succeeded in making their escape, though with difficulty, being followed two or three days' journey by the avengers. 582 684

Infidelity is not rare, and the husband has the redress of whipping the woman and dismissing her if he desires, and of whipping her paramour if he is able. But so cautious are the people about the blood limit of intermarriage, that a woman on giving birth to an illegitimate child, for fear that it will not know the family to which it belongs, will usually brave the punishment, and at once confess its paternity. 837 684 [848]

As cousins are called brother and sister, so are not only the brothers and sisters, but even the cousins of a wife or husband all called indiscriminately brother and sister-in-law; so that a person may on a single marriage find that he has annexed fifty or a hundred of these interesting relations. 601

On the death of the head of the family, the next oldest brother, or in default of a brother, a cousin or uncle assumes his place, and is then called father by the children. This does not involve any especial material duties, such as the support of the family; but is rather a sort of honorary title; giving him, however, the ruling voice in any family council or discussion. 593 768

On the death of an individual; if a young person, a woman, or a person of but little consequence, the body is prepared as soon as possible in the manner described below, and carried to the forest; but if a person of more consideration, there are some preliminary ceremonies. These I had the opportunity of witnessing in the case of an old man who died on the Uren when I was present. He belonged to one of the distinguished families, an ancestor, perhaps his father, having been one of the leaders in the war with Tiribi, and he the heir to, and possessor of, one of the few gold "eagles," or insignia of rank. He died in the night, and next morning, the body being in his hammock, covered with a piece of bark cloth; all of the chicha, chocolate, and food that the poor people of the house could get together on short notice were prepared. A fire was lighted, amidst singing, by twirling a pointed stick in a s cket on the face of another. This was the sacred fire, which was communicated to a small heap of wood placed on one side in the house. This could be used for no common purpose whatever. No ordinary fire could be lighted from it; not even could one use a stick of it to light his pipe. It must burn continuously for nine days. In case of its accidentally going out before that time, it must be relighted in the same manner as at first; and at the end of that time, only a priest could extinguish it, and he only with a calabash of chocolate, and during, or at the end rather, of the suitable incantation. 764 766 [372] [784]

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764 768 The custom of burying or otherwise placing with the dead all of his valuables, evidently existed at one time with these people. The Tiribis, who bury their dead, did so, up to within the memory of persons still living, and all matters that could not be buried, like live stock, fruit trees, &c., were ruthlessly destroyed. A more practical method has grown up [428] with the present generation, and they now divide the property of the defunct among the heirs, with as much avidity as in more enlightened communities. So do the Bri-bris and Cabecars, but these compound with their consciences. Whether the Teribis have a similar custom, I am not prepared to say, not having seen a funeral, and having no information that I consider sufficiently trustworthy.

766 The next step after lighting the fire, was for the master of ceremonies, appointed by mutual consent, to cause to be collected some small scrapings of a peculiar wood, called Palo Cacique by the Spaniards. It is a wood used only for walking sticks, and will be again referred to in that connection. He also obtained a large lump of cotton wool, some seeds of a species of pumpkin, and a small root of sweet yucca. All the male friends of the deceased present, seated themselves on low benches in a double line, facing each other, with another bench between. A part of the cotton, spread out so as to make a bulk about the size of a man's hand, was placed in front of the principal person, who then began in a sing-song tone between a recitation and a chant, to relate the merits and deeds of their departed brother. As he proceeded, and mentioned for instance that he had planted much corn, he laid carefully on the cotton a piece of shaving which he said was the "planting stick" used in that operation. Another laid aside of it a piece of pumpkin seed, which represented the corn. Another taking up the song, related how he had shot fish, and another shaving was the arrow. An impromptu string a couple of inches long, twisted out of the cotton, and stained red with the powder from some annatto seeds, was a rope with which he had led a cow, bought years before in Terraba. This lasted for an hour, until every tool or weapon he had ever used was represented by a little pile of seeds and shavings on the cotton. But he was a great man and his "eagle" was not to be forgotten. A very rude imitation of it was cut out of the skin of the yucca root and placed on top of all his other property, and then the edges of the cotton were doubled over making all into a ball. This was placed on his breast, next his body, and he was thus armed and equipped with all he had used or owned in this world, ready for use in the other; and his heirs none the poorer.

The body was then enveloped in the piece of "mastate" or bark cloth that he had used as a blanket, together with the hammock in which he swung. A quantity of "platanillo" leaves, a leaf not unlike that of the plantain, but only half the size and much tougher, were placed on the ground, two or three deep. The bundle was laid on this, the edges of the leaf envelope, doubled over, and dexterously tied by strips of bark string and the whole turned out a very respectable Egyptian mummy done in

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766 [533] in part unintelligible to the uninitiated. At the end of each stanza was a chorus, where the priests, who during the stanza kept time with their rattles, now gave a peculiar twirl, and the lay singers joined in the chorus.

As the song approached its end, the leader was furnished with a big gourd of steaming chocolate, holding about a quart. As he finished, landing the dear departed safe beyond further troubles, he announced it with a most unearthly yell, in which all hands joined; he at the same time turning the chocolate over the fire, totally extinguishing it. The party at once arose and for a minute or two all was bustle and confusion of preparation.

[767] [183] A person, whose office it is to handle the dead, endeavored to lower the bundle but it was a little out of his reach. Nobody else could touch it for fear of defiling himself. To lend a hand would have cost an Indian three days of purification. I drew my long knife, which all learn to carry in this country, as an actual necessity; and with a couple of blows cut the fastenings and brought the little cane rack, bundle of bones and all, tumbling into the outstretched arms of the official, with much more haste than solemnity. Nobody seemed shocked, and being a foreigner, and withal a medicine man, who had made cures where their best doctors had failed, I was of course impregnable to *bu-ku-ru'*. The aforesaid official now lashed the package to its stick, and two long slender strings of loosely twisted cotton were tied to the head of the package.

[587] Santiago had had three wives. One of them had re-married to his successor; but there were two remaining in widowhood. A procession was formed. First came the priests with their rattles. Next the chorus singers with their drums. Next the corpse, borne by two men, and preceded by the two widows, each holding the end of one of the cotton strings, leading the dead, as it were, to his final resting-place. Next ourselves, as the most distinguished persons present, and escorted by the two chiefs. Behind us came the older men, and following them the usual rag, tag, and bob-tail of young men, women, boys, and persons of no account generally. Some of the boys however, true to boy nature, were as usual irrepressible, and instead of keeping decorously in place, skirmished ahead, and on the flanks of the procession, mounting stumps, logs, or other commanding points to take in the general effect of the pageant. As the procession filed out of the house, some old chicha jars [168] were carried out and ostentatiously broken; but I observed that nothing of real value was destroyed. As soon as the line got fairly under way, the priests struck up another song which was kept up until the procession halted.

Everybody had been on so long a debauch that it was decided to take a rest of three or four days before the party started off. But it was necessary that the bones should be removed from the house. A temporary ranch had therefore been built a few hundred yards distant; and to this the remains were carried and deposited until the bearers were in a fit condition to proceed.

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
[P.31 (B)] SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri
Cabecar

767 764 **The Organizer of Feasts.** This position is common to both Talamancan peoples and is covered by a single title, *bikä'kra*. One has to study to achieve it.[111] The principal tasks of the Organizer of Feasts is at the death of an individual to designate the persons who must [273] plant the maize to be used for the chicha at the time of the bone funeral; to name those who are to make it; and those who have to provide chocolate, plantains, pigs, etc., for the feast. On the Pacific slope, this position has [756] also been absorbed by the medicine man.

764 **The já.** Back in the woodland, however, where authorities and visitors are scarce, the method of handling the dead adheres to former [775] usage. Things must be prepared for the soul of the deceased. This is done by those known as the *já:* three adults if an adult died, or three girls, or three boys, such as the case may be. Cotton must be placed inside the body bundle of a woman. Combs and other ornaments are carried apart with the clothes of the dead. Even if a person has a lot of clothes, all are put in the grave. If a boy dies, a miniature bow and arrow are substituted for the cotton. But when the deceased is a man, in addition to this, they place a miniature blow gun, fish hook, and digging stick in the bundle. This ● [768] is done in order to leave the real ones for the family's use. A net carrying bag is also placed with the dead man.

[767] **First Burial.** When death takes over, the entire retinue of officials begin their work. Of course, customs vary depending upon the [656] geographical location. Government and eccle- [797] siastical authorities have prohibited the fundamental part of the ancient rites, that is, the keeping of the dead for a year before burial. Usually, the body is left in the house for about twenty-four hours by both the Bribri and Cabécar who are located near non-indigenous villages on the Caribbean side. The personal belongings of the deceased, either in effect or symbolically, and cacao paste are placed beside the corpse which is then wrapped in *mastate* (*see* Bark Cloth) and tied with a cotton string made especially for this purpose

[767] [593] tion between *sini* and *sinąbwak?* (*See* Social Organization.)

[110] Gabb, 1875, p. 508.

[111] Lehmann, 1920, vol. 1, p. 220.

[112] Pittier, 1938, p. 17.

764 blessed by the Roman Catholic priest, and the
[797] dead are buried in the earth shortly after life
[184] ceases. The medicine man and the Burier are the only persons to touch the body, however. The preparations, including a funeral feast and the blocking of cross roads on the main trail, are carried out by both Bribri and Cabécar with much of the detail noted in Talamanca.
[184] A plank of wood under the body, chiefly in Ujarrás, or the body wrapped in *bijagua* leaves or a cloth were the usual procedures on the Pacific side before placing the dead in the
[177] grave. The writer was present, however, at Cabagra in 1956 when a coffin was used for the first time. The school gave the planks and nails and lent the hammer for its manufacture. A description of this death and burial follows.

As soon as the woman died, a rope wick was lighted by the body. Everything immedi-
● 768 ately around the deceased, such as her bed
764 which was made of cane poles and a reed mattress, a sack which was over the bed and upon which she lay, were removed by the Burier. On this occasion there were three Buriers and one apprentice. The bed and mattress were thrown over a cliff, and the sack was used to line the coffin. The corpse
764 was wrapped in a cheap cotton blanket by the Buriers and put in the coffin. The best dress of the departed, one of blue cotton cloth with yellow dots, was placed on top of the wrapped body and the planks for the cover were nailed on.

During this whole procedure, the family disappeared and none of the stand-bys would look at what was happening. When the coffin was ready, a girl took branches which had been cut for the purpose and outlined a path stretching from both doors of the house to the main trail. The Buriers then tied the coffin onto a litter with rope. As soon as this was done, the girl went ahead down the trail to the cemetery, blocking any opening in the path with branches. When a river had to be crossed, branches were placed on the rocks and at the shallow edges to mark the way so that the soul could
[775] not stray on its journey back to the house from the grave. The Buriers followed with the coffin. One carried a wooden cross, a lighted wick made of *mastate* (*see* Bark Cloth), and an unlighted candle.

At the cemetery, the wick and the candle